Development of alternative fuels

2202. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are making concerted efforts to develop alternative fuels to overcome crude crisis;

(b) whether Government have succeeded in their efforts; and

(c) if so, the progress achieved in this endeavour, so far?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The various steps undertaken for alternative fuel development so far are as follows:

— Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas have issued directives for sale of 5% ethanol-blended petrol in 10 sugar producing States and 3 contiguous Union Territories. The success of the programme would, however depend upon assured availability of ethanol at economic prices.

— Two pilot projects at Rewari (Haryana) and Mumbai (Maharashtra) have been launched by the Oil Marketing Companies to examine the operational, financial environmental and other related aspects of blending of bio-diesel with diesel.

— A road map for storage, supply and distribution of hydrogen as an alternative fuel has been drawn up by the Research & Development Centre of Indian Oil Corporation Limited.

— A Steering Committee (backed by a Technical Committee) has been reconstituted during October, 2000 under National Gas Hydrate Programme with the ultimate objective of harnessing gas hydrates on a commercial scale.

Promotion of LPG

t2203. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the average percentage of the consumers of cooking gas in different States in comparison to the population of those States;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.